

Hussein Tawbi, MD, PhD

Hussein Tawbi is Professor of Melanoma Medical Oncology, Investigational Cancer Therapeutics, Deputy Chair and Director of Melanoma Clinical Research and Early Drug Development at the Department of Melanoma Medical Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He is also Co-Director of the MD Anderson Brain Metastasis Clinic. Dr. Tawbi joined MD Anderson in 2015 and in addition to being a melanoma clinician, he develops and conducts multiple clinical trials with translational endpoints in melanoma, sarcoma, and immunotherapy. His role at MD Anderson includes providing the vision and direction of clinical translational research at the Department of Melanoma Medical Oncology and enhance the operations of the clinical research staff.

Dr. Tawbi obtained his MD in 2001 from the American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon. Dr. Tawbi completed his training in Internal Medicine and Hematology/Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh and joined the faculty ranks at the University of Pittsburgh as an Assistant Professor in 2007 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2014. His clinical training was coupled with formal instruction in Clinical and Translational Research that culminated in a PhD degree in Clinical and Translational Science in 2011. Dr. Tawbi joined the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center as Associate Professor in the Departments of Melanoma Medical Oncology and Investigational Cancer Therapeutics in November 2015, and recently appointed Director of Melanoma Clinical Research and Early Drug Development. The primary focus of his research has been early phase studies of novel agents in melanoma and sarcoma. Dr. Tawbi has designed, and conducted many Phase I and Phase II studies in both diseases. Specifically, he participated in the early studies of targeted agents (vemurafenib, dabrafenib, and trametinib) and immunotherapy agents (nivolumab and pembrolizumab). He has been interested in the study of special populations including patients with organ dysfunction and patients with melanoma brain metastases. Given that patients with melanoma brain metastases have been traditionally excluded from clinical trials, Dr. Tawbi has multicenter Phase II studies dedicated to this population and have shown that the combination of ipilimumab and nivolumab in untreated melanoma brain metastases is safe and has a high rate of durable responses exceeding 55%,

Dr. Tawbi has over 120 publications in high impact journals including the NEJM, Nature, Science, Lancet Oncology, Journal of Clinical Oncology, Cancer Discovery, Cancer Research, Clinical Cancer Research, Journal for the Immunotherapy of Cancer (JITC), among others. He is an active member of SWOG and Vice-Chair of the SWOG Melanoma Committee, the Society for Melanoma Research, the Society for the Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC), ESMO, ASCO, and AACR.